

# NIANTIC BAPTIST CHURCH

*Seeking to authentically love our Lord and our neighbors*



443 Main St, Niantic, CT 06357



(860) 739-5131



nianticbaptist@gmail.com



[nianticbaptistchurch.org](http://nianticbaptistchurch.org)



[nianticbaptistchurch](https://www.instagram.com/nianticbaptistchurch)



[facebook.com/nianticbaptistchurch](https://facebook.com/nianticbaptistchurch)

## ***Pastoral Search Committee***

### ***Chairperson***

Evelyn Liberty-Topliff  
25 Viets St  
New London, CT 06320  
860-443-0756  
[etopliff@snet.net](mailto:etopliff@snet.net)

## ***American Baptist Churches of Connecticut***

### ***Regional Consultant***

Rev. Dr. Harry L. Riggs, II  
90A N. Main St.  
West Hartford, CT 06107  
(860) 521-5421  
[hrriggs@abcconn.org](mailto:hrriggs@abcconn.org)

# Contents

<b>I. Our Church and Community.....</b>	<b>5</b>
The Community.....	5
Church Demographics.....	5
Church Organization and ABC Participation.....	6
Church Finances.....	6
<b>II. Our History.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Brief History (See Appendix A for detailed history).....	6
<b>III. Congregational Style Indicator Summary.....</b>	<b>7</b>
Our Church tends very strongly.....	7
Our Church tends.....	7
Our Church somewhat tends.....	7
<b>IV. Our Ministry.....</b>	<b>8</b>
Fellowship.....	8
Missions.....	8
Leadership & Decision Making.....	8
Social Issues.....	9
Traditions.....	9
<b>V. Our Church Life.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>VI. Our Worship Life.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>VII. What We Believe.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>VIII. Our Vision for Our Ministry and Our New Pastor.....</b>	<b>11</b>
Strengths of the Church.....	11
Future Vision.....	12
Needs of the Community.....	12
<b>IX. Pastoral Requirements.....</b>	<b>12</b>
Expectations of our Pastor.....	12
Ministry Priorities.....	13
NBC's Commitment to our Pastor.....	13
<b>X. Compensation and Benefits.....</b>	<b>14</b>
Pastor's Compensation.....	14
Benefits.....	14
Reimbursement for Ministry-Related Expenses.....	14
Moving Costs.....	14
<b>Appendix A: Detailed Church History.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Appendix B: Typical Sunday Bulletin.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Appendix C: Statement of Beliefs.....</b>	<b>20</b>

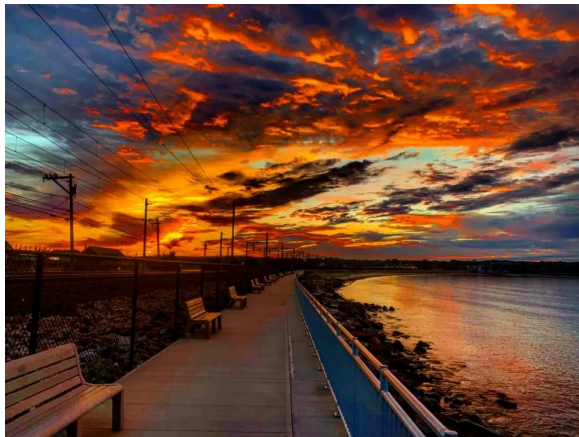




*Welcome to NBC*



*Chancel Choir*



*Niantic Boardwalk*



*Annual strawberry-shortcake festival*



*Baptism at McCook Point Beach*



*Harkness State Park*





*Christmas Carol Sing*



*East Lyme Day*



*Local Mystic Seaport Museum*



*Thanksgiving Potluck*



*Bible Study*



*Care packages for Reliance House*



## I. Our Church and Community

Niantic Baptist Church (NBC) is best described as an “old established” church, having organized in 1843. We are located in the village of Niantic in the town of East Lyme, Connecticut. We are the "daughter" church of the Flanders Baptist and Community Church.

### The Community

East Lyme's population in the 2020 census was 18,693, although this can double during the summer tourist season. Niantic is a coastal village within the town of East Lyme, Connecticut, known for its scenic boardwalk, vibrant waterfront, and charming seaside atmosphere. It's a popular destination for visitors and residents alike, offering a mix of attractions, dining, and recreational activities. It is a wonderful town welcoming to residents of all ages with its many community programs and events, three town beaches, year-round farmers market, popular library and community center, highly rated school system, indoor town pool, multi-town bus routes, proximity to mass transit services and small-town atmosphere. The town's website provides a wealth of information. <https://nianticmainstreet.org/about-east-lyme/>

### Church Demographics

The following are the age demographics as of 2025. One-third of our members are attending school and/or employed; two-thirds are retirees. Most are single adults, or widowed, or married with no children at home.

Age	Male	Female	Total
0-9	0	4	4
10-19	0	2	2
20-45	7	7	14
46-65	4	8	12
66+	12	36	48
Total	23	57	80

Household category (approximate):

5	Single female parent with one or more children at home
27	Married with no children at home
9	Married with one or more children at home
4	Single adults living with parents
15	Single adults not living with parents
13	Widowed living alone
1	Widowed with one or more children at home

Employment (approximate):

21	Employed full-time
----	--------------------

2	Employed part-time
4	Unemployed
48	Retired
2	Student

### **Church Organization and ABC Participation**

Our church is overseen by the Diaconate, a twelve-member Board of Stewards, an Investment Advisory Committee, and a Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, which is currently serving as our Pastor Search Committee. We regularly send 2 or 3 representatives to the ABCCONN and SUNL association meetings and we encourage our pastors to meet with other local church leaders to ensure NBC's involvement in our town's spiritual growth and common issues.

### **Church Finances**

The church has a solid financial foundation due to the financial stewardship of the church leadership and a generous endowment bequeathed by former members. This has allowed us to maintain a balanced budget while completing numerous improvement projects, such as repaving the parking lot, replacing the sanctuary windows, modernizing the sound system, refurbishing the sanctuary tin walls, and upgrading both furnaces.

## **II. Our History**

### **Brief History (See Appendix A for detailed history)**

The Second Baptist Church of East Lyme was founded in 1843 by 55 members of the East Lyme Baptist Church and 3 members of the First Baptist Church of Waterford. The church's first meetinghouse was constructed that same year on land donated by Roswell & Mary Smith and Benjamin & Clarissa Champlin. The church building burned to the ground in 1866 and was rebuilt and rededicated on the same site in 1867. The new building featured frescoed tin walls. The church's name was changed to Niantic Baptist Church in 1889.



*NBC prior to 1938*

A baptistry was installed under the pulpit in 1894 and used for the first time that Easter. A tin ceiling was installed in 1907, electric lights in 1914 which were replaced by larger lights in 1923, and Hunt Hall was added in 1959. The 1938 hurricane destroyed the tall box cupola above the belfry, which was replaced with the current pointed cupola.



NBC has ministered to its members and the community continuously since it was founded, missing only two weeks of worship at the beginning of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic before launching Zoom worship services while the building was closed. In-person worship resumed in September 2020, and a hybrid worship service is now offered every Sunday.

In recent years NBC has undergone many restorations and updates. We've had the sanctuary reroofed, the basement refurbished, the sanctuary refurbished and rededicated, two new furnaces installed, replaced front windows, updated our sound system and had the parking lot repaved. We do our best to maintain the church building and grounds to enhance its beauty and functionality for our community.



*Deacon Jan Logozzo holding our youngest member (featuring historical tin walls in sanctuary)*

### **III. Congregational Style Indicator Summary**

#### **Our Church tends very strongly...**

- to be influenced by history and tradition.
- to make plans and consider ideas by board or committee (versus by an informal network).
- to take an educational approach to social issues, leaving action to individual conscience.

#### **Our Church tends...**

- to expect our pastor to take leadership
- to make ethical decisions based on absolute standards, regardless of circumstances.
- to be involved in community affairs.
- to maintain our relationship to ABC locally, nationally and internationally.
- to place emphasis on giving to ABC national and world missions.
- to make decisions by boards.
- to formally communicate decisions through worship, bulletins, and email.

#### **Our Church somewhat tends...**

- to make use of conflict and confrontation to solve problems.

## IV. Our Ministry

### Fellowship

We strive to embody the fellowship of believers described in Acts 2. When someone needs assistance, regardless of their membership, the congregation steps in to help. Our Deacons visit and pray for the housebound and hospitalized. Our members share meals and companionship.

People show up early for Bible study and stay late to chat. Twice a month we enjoy a coffee hour, often with a potluck-style lunch. New-comers will find a welcoming reception with a friendly greeting and at our traditional service.



*Potluck Dinner in Hunt Hall*

### Missions

We believe in the importance of missions to spread the love and knowledge of Christ throughout the world. We vigorously support the national and international missions through ABCUSA which includes America for Christ, One Great Hour of Sharing, World Missions Offering, and the Retired Ministers and Missionary Offering. We actively support local missions through such organizations as Care & Share and Shoreline Soup Kitchen & Food Pantries (local food and emergency support organizations), Safe Futures (the local domestic violence shelter) and the Homeless Hospitality Center (the local homeless assistance program). Our in-house Prayer Shawl Ministry provides our members with the opportunity to provide a warm, handcrafted "hug" for anyone who has medical or other needs.

We encourage the use of our church for programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous and the American Red Cross. Our Diaconate is heavily invested in supporting the needs of our local community, and our membership donates with an amazing abundance.

### Leadership & Decision Making

Our church expects our pastor to be responsible for the spiritual leadership of the congregation. The Diaconate and Board of Stewards serve to support our pastor's vision and to meet the spiritual, physical, financial, and educational needs of the congregation. The pastor's leadership is valued by the Diaconate and Board of Stewards.



The church entrusts the Board of Stewards, or special committees when required, for church administration. These plans are communicated through regular announcements, the church bulletin, and email. All major decisions are discussed as a body and voted upon by the congregation. We make our decisions with a focus on listening to God's calling, adhering to ethical standards regardless of the circumstances, and responsibly stewarding our financial resources.

### **Social Issues**

Our church's approach to social issues tends to be educational, leaving action to individual conscience. The church expects Biblically based moral and ethical leadership from our Pastor. The church is focused on loving all people as beings made in God's image and abstains from assuming political positions.

### **Traditions**

Our church values tradition and celebrates our long history in Niantic. Our community and connection is strengthened by a traditional order of worship and events throughout the liturgical calendar, such as Maundy Thursday, international communion Sunday, and Christmas Eve. We value the many fellowship events such as summer picnics, Thanksgiving dinner, and giving out cocoa and cookies during the town's annual Light Parade.



*Lighting the Advent Candles*

## **V. Our Church Life**

NBC has a vibrant church life! We provide opportunities to deepen our understanding of scripture through...

- Sunday School for all ages (a mixed pre-K thru elementary class and an adult study)
- Midweek small group Bible study
- Weekend Bible study

Our congregation participates in fellowship through...

- Monday Men's coffee hour
- Baptist Women's Group
- Monthly coffee hour & potluck lunches
- ABC Conferences
- Regular social gatherings (summer picnic, strawberry shortcake social, Thanksgiving dinner)

We worship together with our...

- Chancel choir
- Handbell choir
- Regular musical soloists
- Ecumenical worship events

We support mission work such as...

- Basic needs supplementation
- Global ABC mission support
- Food and clothing drives



*Handbell Choir*

## **VI. Our Worship Life**

NBC meets on Sundays for a traditional style service. Our services exude joy, fellowship, and faith. We share our prayers openly and center our hearts through liturgy. We join in worship with amazing music from our chancel choir, hand bell choir, instrumentalists, and with traditional hymns. Our church has a deep love of music and seeks to glorify God through worship.

A typical Sunday Bulletin, containing the order of worship, can be found in Appendix B. Our order of worship is planned by the music leadership and pastor. Our lay leaders participate in announcements, reading scripture, leading unison prayers, and responsive litanies. The congregation shares their prayers openly during the service. The pastor leads a children's moment, preaches, and administers communion on the first Sunday of the month.

## **VII. What We Believe**

We believe that the love of Christ is the foundation of our community. Our goal is to embody that love in all that we do. We welcome everyone to experience the transformative power of Christ's love at NBC. Our Lord welcomes us as we are, and we attempt to do the same for one another and ourselves; however, the Lord doesn't leave us as we are – we each must recognize our sin, ask for His forgiveness, agree that Jesus is the only Way, accept Jesus as our Savior and Lord, and then yield to His will to be transformed into His likeness. We believe our purpose is to give visible form to that faith and fellowship to which God has called His people. We are a church in which and through which Jesus Christ continues to minister to the world by His Holy Spirit. (Rom. 3:23, I John 1:9, John 14:6, Rom. 6:1-2, II Cor. 5:17-19)

Foremost among our beliefs is that Jesus Christ is our Redeemer and our Lord, and that through belief in Him we are assured of eternal fellowship with a loving God (John 1:1-5, John 3:16). Holy Scripture is the most authoritative guide to knowing and serving the triune God: Father,



Son and Holy Spirit – Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer (2 Timothy 3:16-17, Matthew 28:19). As the divinely inspired word of God, the Bible reveals how to live our faith in His service.

We affirm the priesthood of all believers based on the conviction that all who truly accept Christ as Lord and Savior and earnestly seek God are able to approach God directly through prayer in Jesus' name and worship. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, each individual has the responsibility and obligation to interpret Scripture within the community of faith, rather than embrace a prepared creed. We cherish our own God-given gift of "soul freedom," and as such, we support religious freedom for all to seek God's will through Jesus, Who will return at the time appointed by God the Father. (John 14:6, Acts 1:11, 1 Peter 2:5, 9, Revelation 1:5-6)

*See Appendix C for NBC's complete  
Statement of Beliefs*



*Baptismal Mural painted by Phyllis  
Andrade, 1954*

## **VIII. Our Vision for Our Ministry and Our New Pastor**

### **Strengths of the Church**

The church hopes to maintain these strengths of love, praise, and giving:

**Our Fellowship:** Our church is bound in a familial love that you can sense when you walk in the doors. We seek to welcome all newcomers from any background and truly believe the words we sing after each communion while encircling the sanctuary and holding hands: "Blest be the ties that bind our hearts in Christian love; the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above."

**Our Worship:** Our church has a deep love of music and seeks to glorify God through worship. All who wish to participate in the music program are welcome - currently 20-25 people are involved.



*Chancel Choir*

**Our Generosity:** In the spirit of 2 Corinthians 9:7, our church gives generously and cheerfully. We support our congregants, the local community and global missions.

**Our Leadership:** Our Board of Stewards and Diaconate provide the administrative and spiritual leadership for our congregation. The stewards approach ensures decisions are made in a balanced and accountable forum. The Diaconate prayerfully shepherds the congregation in studying the Word, organizing mission work, and supporting our pastor.

### **Future Vision**

NBC is focused on growth and interested in adding more ministry opportunities and small groups for the middle-generations. This segment of the congregation is interested in growing in community and deepening their faith. We recognize that our demographics are biased toward mature generations. We are planning for the succession and mentoring of new-generations in the church.

We want NBC to grow and provide a church home for more people in the community. To that end, NBC is focused on maintaining a loving family atmosphere and enhancing its communication and outreach to the community. We are increasing the visibility of our church through increased involvement in community events and social media. We aim to provide more opportunities for fellowship and spiritual development for youth and adults.

### **Needs of the Community**

We need to expand our outreach to the community, to welcome people in and meet them where they are. To this end, we are faithfully growing Bible study programs, youth ministry, and child care. We are excited to pursue this vision with our new pastor.

## **IX. Pastoral Requirements**

We are seeking a pastor who loves the Lord, prays continually, has a personal relationship with Christ, and recognizes their need for Salvation through Him (Matthew 22:37-39, I Thes. 5:17, Romans 1:16, Romans 3:23). It is important that they are a person of high moral character, spiritual maturity, and faithful steward of time and finances. Our church expects that the pastor knows and preaches the Word—teaching and leading our church with patience, encouragement, and correction, showing us how to follow His way in our everyday lives (II Timothy 4:2). We expect that they will love all people as Jesus taught us to love (Leviticus 19:18, Galatians 3:28).

### **Expectations of our Pastor**

- Supporting the preaching ministry with time for preparation/reflection on the Word, and commitment to listen for the Spirit's prompting and its implications for individuals, the church, the community and the world.



- Participating actively in worship, offering feedback and suggestions for greater participation and effectiveness in the expression of praise, thanksgiving and devotion to God.
- Shepherding the congregation-visiting the hospitalized and homebound, praying for the Church, leading with moral character.
- Prioritizing church growth with a vision for a healthy and enduring future
- Fostering personal growth in faith by sponsoring Bible Studies and Sunday School
- Developing personal relationships and being approachable
- Cooperating with local church leaders from Baptist and other denominations.

### **Ministry Priorities**

- Tier 1
  - Interpreting the Faith
  - Preaching the whole Word of God
- Tier 2
  - Pastoral Care
- Tier 3
  - Leadership Development
  - Counseling
  - Church Growth
  - Worship Preparation and Leading
- Other (listed from medium to low priority)
  - Program Development
  - Mission Promotion
  - Conflict Management
  - Personnel Supervision
  - Spiritual Life Development
  - Education
  - Interchurch Cooperation
  - Stewardship
  - Nurturing Fellowship

### **NBC's Commitment to our Pastor**

- Praying for and encouraging our pastor
- Respecting their role, ministry, and authority
- Submitting to their guidance as long as it aligns with scripture
- Supporting their continued professional development
- Financially supporting the needs of the pastor and their family
- Working as a team to support the church's vision
- Holding the pastor accountable for their life and doctrine

## **X. Compensation and Benefits**

### **Pastor's Compensation**

Item	Amount
Salary	\$35,000-50,000*
Housing Allowance	\$25,000
Social Security Offset (7.5%)	\$ 2,600- 3,800
Total:	\$62,600-78,800

\*Based on experience and education.

### **Benefits**

Medical/Dental Insurance: \$12,000

Retirement: 5% of monthly salary contribution

Death Benefit Plan

### **Reimbursement for Ministry-Related Expenses**

Personal auto at federal mileage rate (currently \$0.70 per mile): \$1,400

Continuing Education: \$2,500

Professional Expenses: \$1000.00

Continuing Education: 2 weeks per year

Vacation & Sick Leave: 21 days per year (3 Sundays)

Sabbatical Leave: 4 months after 5 years' service

### **Moving Costs**

Coverage of moving costs are negotiable.

## **Appendix A: Detailed Church History**

### **Establishment**

In the early 1800's, local Baptists worshipped at the Baptist Church of East Lyme, located along the Post Road (now Rte. 1) in the northern section of the town.

Several members living in the shoreline area desired a closer meeting house. They first gathered in December 1842, and in January 1843 founded the "Second Baptist Church in East Lyme". This included 55 members of that first Baptist church (including 3 members of the Nehantic tribe and 2 African Americans) and 3 members of the First Baptist Church of Waterford. The church entered New London Association in 1845, and in 1905, it was officially incorporated as the Niantic Baptist Church.

### **Our Meetinghouse**

1843 - The original sanctuary was built.

1866 - The building succumbed to fire. The next year, a new sanctuary with a two-story addition at the rear was constructed and dedicated.

1868 - Tin walls and a bell were installed.

1894 - A Baptistry was installed under the pulpit. Previously, baptisms were held at the beach or in the Niantic River.

1907 - Tin ceiling was installed.

1914 - Electric lights were first installed, replaced by larger lights in 1923.

1938 - The Hurricane of 1938 blew off the roof's double cupola bell tower, which was replaced by the current single cupola.

1954 - Phyllis Andrade painted the baptismal mural in the sanctuary.

1959 - the Hunt Fellowship Hall was added, named in honor of Rev. Horace Hunt.

1962 - The current Communion Table was dedicated.

1964 - A fire damaged the stairwell and upstairs pastor's study; during renovation, the pastor's study was moved to its current place on the main floor, and all upstairs rooms made into classrooms.

1968 - A house standing on the lawn between the parking lot and Main Street was purchased. Due to its deteriorated condition, it was demolished in 1971.

1971 - An outside bulletin board was installed.

1982 - A handicap-accessible ramp was built at the side door.

1987 - Ceiling fans were installed in the sanctuary.

2018 - The outside bulletin board was replaced with a memorial sign and planter.

2023 - One of the church's aging furnaces had a "blow-out", depositing fine soot throughout the main floor. The sanctuary needed to be stripped and repainted. During this time, we held services in the "basement chapel", put together in the downstairs hallway.

2024- A second new furnace was installed to complete the replacement of the church's old furnace. Replaced church front windows.



2025 - Repaving of parking lot, added gutter toppers, upgraded sound system, and replaced door locks.

### **Our Pastoral History**

During its first 130 years, the church had 45 pastors, most of whom stayed 3 or less years. Some were students or recent graduates of the Yale Divinity School. In the past 50 years, we have had four pastors, three of them staying for 10 or more years.

Rev. Edward Bradley was our pastor from 1974 to 1990, before retiring due to ill health. Ed brought healing to our church after a conflict and division that occurred due to controversy with the previous minister. He made important Bylaws changes, led us through many missions programs, and pushed for greater involvement of the laity. He started the “children’s message” during worship service. He brought together and organized our young adults. He first recommended that summer Sunday worship be started earlier, at 9:30 rather than 11:00. And he helped us develop an entire year’s worth of celebrations for our 150th anniversary. He passed away in 1992.

Rev. Dr. David Bowes Jr. was our pastor from 1991 to his retirement in 2001 due to ill health. David was very intellectual, and a good Bible teacher. He helped us involve our youth more, and led us through a Bylaws revision. He shared with us his sabbatical trip to Israel, which he had made into a professionally narrated video. He passed on in 2009.

Rev. Michael Crane was our pastor from 2003 to his resignation in 2005. He started our Monday Morning Men's Bible Study. He led us into community involvement by partnering with Care & Share. And he started our distribution of hot cocoa and homemade cookies during the East Lyme Light Parade in December.

Rev. Jill Harvey was our pastor for 17 years, from 2008 until her retirement in 2025. She led us in fully revising and streamlining our church's Bylaws, moving from several boards and committees to one Board of Stewards and a Diaconate. She oversaw our pre-COVID outreach programs at local nursing homes. She was our Interim pastor from 2001-2003, when she started "Holy Humor Sunday", held on the Sunday following Easter. When COVID hit and lockdown began in mid-March 2020, it was only two Sundays before she got us back together on Zoom for worship. Our services now still offer Zoom, which has been a blessing in allowing those unable to attend worship in person to join in, and has brought in new friends.

In 1860 a Parsonage was built on the east corner of Main Street and Baptist Lane. It was sold in 1968, when the church purchased a parsonage on Corey Lane. This was sold in 2010. The church currently has no Parsonage.

## **Our Music History**

- Dr. Judy Mack began her service as our Music Director in November 1977.
- We purchased a three-octave set of Hand Chimes in 1989, and the church purchased a set of English hand bells in 1995, eventually acquiring 5 octaves.
- We have performed cantatas at Easter or Christmas, and sung with the choirs at Flanders Baptist and Community Church and St. Paul's. In the choir's younger years, we presented "Hilltop Follies" programs with secular songs, such as a Gershwin tribute.
- Our carillon plays through speakers in the cupola. An original carillon which was purchased in 1977 eventually wore out, and in 2018 a new carillon was installed.

## **Missions and Outreach**

- On December 22, 1842, the Ladies' Aid Society was founded, as an aid to the forthcoming church and for any other work of "Christian benevolence". It disbanded in 1990.
- In 1975 we joined with other churches to form the East Lyme-Waterford Interfaith Refugee Resettlement Committee; we purchased the house east of the parking lot and sponsored a Laotian family, who lived there from 1976 to 1979. When the family relocated, it was sold. This Committee was last active in 2003.
- In 1989 - 2000 we had a Pantry Closet to distribute food to those in need. We now are regular contributors to Care & Share, our town's nonprofit food, financial, and emergency support organization. We are always collecting food, and help provide summer Picnic Baskets, holiday gifts or cards, and collect coats and jackets.
- We started a weekly playgroup, PlayPals, in 1992. It was held from September through June and was free and open to the public. There could be over 20 children & parents/caregivers at each session. It was discontinued in 2011.
- From 1996 through 2012 we took part in Camp Wightman's "Adopt-a-Cabin" program, overseeing annual care of the Gertrude Waterman cabin.
- Our Prayer Circle was started in 1999, and is very active to this day.
- In 2004 we began handing out free hot cocoa and home-made cookies at the annual Light Parade, which passes by the front of our church.
- In 2008 until COVID we took part in the Missional Church program by initiating Bride Brook Blessings, supporting its residents with cards and other small items. Eventually we added Bayview Blessings for the Bayview nursing facility.
- A Prayer shawl ministry was started around 2010 and continues to this day
- In 2010 we received the Widow's Mite Award for continuous support of RMMO.
- In 2013 through the Make a Difference international program, we took part in the Tanzania Orphanage Prayer Partnership.
- We have participated in several ecumenical services, especially around Thanksgiving.
- In 2023 we began a partnership with the newly-formed Christ Presbyterian Church, contracting with them to provide our sanctuary and facilities for their afternoon and evening worship and fellowship, until they are able to acquire a building of their own.

- In 2024 we received an award for outstanding giving to ABC United Missions.

### **Church Anniversaries**

From 1993 through 1994 we held our Sesquicentennial Celebration. This was a year of special services recognizing church history, a banquet, a homecoming, old-fashioned baptisms in Niantic Bay, and public presentation of the historical pageant "150 Years in Song", written by music director Judy Mack.

The church has celebrated its anniversary every 25 years. For our 175th anniversary in 2018 we held a simple Homecoming Sunday and dinner.



## Appendix B: Typical Sunday Bulletin

### THE NIAN TIC BAPTIST CHURCH

November 23, 2025 – Thanksgiving Sunday

---

#### Quote for the Day

“If a man is called to be a street sweeper,  
he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or  
Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry.  
He should sweep streets so well that all heaven and earth will pause to say,  
here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well.”  
Martin Luther King, Jr.

\* Stand as you are able

**Gathering Song**                      “Sanctuary”                      482  
Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true;  
With thanksgiving, I’ll be a living sanctuary for you.

#### Welcome & Announcements

**Prelude**                      “Spirit Song”                      Chancel Bells

**\*Call to Worship** – based on Psalm 100

Leader: Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.

*People: We come to serve the Lord with gladness and to enter His presence with singing.*

Leader: Know that the Lord, He is God! It is He who made us, and we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.

*People: We enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise! Thank You for the gift of life; give thanks to Him; bless his name!*

**\*Opening Hymn**                      “We Praise You, O God”                      726

**\*Prayer of Invocation and the Lord’s Prayer**

Gracious God, we come before you today with hearts full of gratitude. Thank You for Your endless love and for the thanksgiving meals we will share. We

thank You for the family and friends that will gather while also remembering those who cannot be with us. Bless the food that will nourish our bodies and souls. Hear us now as we pray... Our Father (debts)...

**\*Gloria Patri**                      734

**Scripture Reading** ~ John 4:21-26                      863

**Anthem**                      “Bless This House”                      Chancel Choir

**Prayers of the People**

**Choral Response**

**Offering our Blessings to God**

**Offertory**                      “A Thanksgiving Prayer”                      Chancel Choir

**\*Doxology**                      34

**\*Offertory Prayer**

**Children’s Moment**                      Chaplain Joe Parise

**\*Hymn**                      “With Grateful Heart I Thank You, Lord”                      720

**Scripture Reading** ~ John 4:34                      863

**Message**                      “The Samaritan Woman: Finding The Water Of Life”  
Chaplain Joe Parise

**\*Hymn**                      “Come, Ye Thankful People, Come”                      721

**\*Benediction & Postlude**

## **Appendix C: Statement of Beliefs**

### **God & the Trinity**

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe and exists eternally as three co-equal persons: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (i.e. the Trinity.) He is all-powerful, all-knowing, ever-present, never-changing, completely trustworthy, and holy. He is our loving Father who is faithful to His people and His promises.

*Genesis 1:1, Psalm 90:2, Matthew 28:19, 1 Peter 1:2*

Although each member of the Trinity serves different functions, they each possess equal power and authority as “God.” The “Father” is the creator of the overall plan for our universe (John 14:7-11); the “Son,” Jesus, implements the Father’s plan (John 5:25-26; 14:6), and the Holy Spirit administers the Father’s plan (Eph. 1:13-14).

*Matthew 28:19, Mark 1:9-11, John 5:21-23, John 14:10, John 14:16, Romans 8:9-11, 1 Corinthians 8:6, 2 Corinthians 13:14, Hebrews 1:8-10, James 2:19*

### **The Father**

God, the Father, has made the plan for both the physical and spiritual life of man. His intention was to live in communion with humans, like Adam and Eve, in the garden of Eden; however, when the sins of pride and disobedience broke this communion, the Father laid out the plan of restoration through Jesus. His work continues.

*John 14:10-22, John 5: 17, 19, 21*

### **Jesus Christ**

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is both completely human and completely divine God. He lived a completely sinless human life and was crucified on a cross, dying in our place for our sins so that we may be reconciled with God. On the third day He rose bodily from the dead to demonstrate His victory over sin and death. He ascended to heaven and will return again to reign forever as King of Kings. His example shows us how to live.

*Matthew 1:22-23, Isaiah 9:6, John 1:1-5, 14, John 14:10-30, Hebrews 4:14-15, 1 Corinthians 14:3-4 & 15:20, Romans 1:3-4 & 6:9, Acts 1:9-11, 1 Timothy 6:14-15, Titus 2:13*

### **The Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity and is equal with the Father and the Son as God. He lives in every believer from the moment of salvation and provides us understanding in spiritual truth and guidance in doing what is right. The Holy Spirit's presence assures us of our relationship with Christ. He dwells in all believers, convicting us of sin, guiding, teaching, revealing truth, praying with and for us, and giving wisdom. He comforts us, gives us spiritual gifts, and transforms us to be more like Christ.

*2 Corinthians 3:17, John 16:7-13, John 14:16-17, 26, Acts 1:8, 1 Corinthians 2:12, 1 Corinthians 3:16, Ephesians 1:13, Galatians 5:25, Ephesians 5:18*

## **The Bible**

The Bible is God's holy written word. It was written by human authors under the supernatural guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It is the ultimate source of truth for Christians, giving testimonies of God's character, stories of Jesus Christ's life and ministry, examples of transformed lives of believers, as well as instruction and wisdom for daily life.

*2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:20-21, Psalm 119:105, Psalm 119:160, Proverbs 30:5*

## **Humanity**

Humankind was made in the image of God, created to be in a perfect relationship with Him and for the purpose of participating in stewardship of the earth. We became alienated from Him through our own disobedience, which the Bible calls sin. We are incapable of regaining a right relationship with God through our own efforts, which is why God sent his Son Jesus to take the penalty for our sin so that we may be reconciled with God.

*Genesis 1:27, Psalm 8:3-6, Isaiah 53:6, Romans 3:23, Colossians 1:21, Isaiah 59:1-2, Genesis 1:26-30, Genesis 2:7, Genesis 2:18-22, Psalm 32:1-5, Psalm 51:5, Jeremiah 17:5, Acts 17:26-31, Romans 1:19-32, Romans 3:10-18, Romans 3:23, Romans 5:6, Romans 6:6, Romans 7:14-25, 1 Corinthians 1:21-31, 1 Corinthians 15:19, 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, Ephesians 2, Colossians 1:21-23, Colossians 3:9-11*

## **Salvation**

Salvation comes as a result of believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and accepting Him as Savior and Lord, who was crucified, died, and rose from the dead as a sufficient payment for the sins of man. Salvation is a free gift from God to all who believe, and cannot be earned through our own efforts. It is only by trusting in Jesus Christ that we can be saved from an eternal separation from God. Eternal life begins the moment you receive Jesus Christ into your life through faith, when the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in you.

*Romans 3:21-26, Romans 6:23, Ephesians 2:8-9, John 1:12, John 14:16, Titus 3:5-7, Galatians 3:26, Romans 5:1*

## **Believers Baptism**

Baptism is our resurrection into new life in Christ. We believe that baptism is to be administered only to those who have the maturity to understand its profound significance. We follow the biblical example set by Christ when we fully immerse in water, a beautiful symbolic statement of that new life. (Children are "dedicated" to God in a ceremony where the parents promise to bring up the child in the knowledge and admonition of the Lord.)

*Matthew 28:18-20, Romans 6:1-14, Acts 2:38-39*

## **The Church**

The Church is made up of the whole community of believers who are unified through faith in Jesus Christ as the only way to a relationship with God. The Church is committed to the teachings of Jesus Christ, found in the Bible. Members of the Church practice the tenets of worship, prayer, fellowship, evangelism, and seek to share the hope of Christ to the world through love, good deeds, and the message of the Gospel.



*Matthew 16:18-19, Matthew 18:15-20, Acts 2:41-42, Acts 20:28, 1 Corinthians 7:17, 1 Corinthians 12: 4, 7, Ephesians 5:22-32, Colossians 1:18, Colossians 3:15, 1 Peter 5:1-5, Revelation 21:2-3*

### **Holy Communion**

The Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion, commemorates the sacrifice of our Lord. The bread and cup that symbolize the broken body and shed blood offered by Christ remind us today of God's great love for us—just as they did for the disciples 2,000 years ago on the eve of the crucifixion. All those who profess Jesus as their Savior and Lord are invited to participate.

*Matthew 26:26-28*

### **Evangelism**

Every believer is called to spread the gospel. There are varying ways, but the message is the same as the disciples carried: God loves you and has a plan for your life; if you recognize and confess you are a sinner and accept the free gift of salvation from Jesus, He will then forgive you and cleanse you from unrighteousness through His sacrifice; the Spirit will then dwell in you and empower you to live as God knows to be the best way.

*Matthew 28:19-20, Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 1:21,23*

### **Your Eternal Life**

We were created to exist forever, both physically and spiritually. Every human is destined to die physically, but every person will choose spiritual life or death while they are on earth: eternal life with God in the new heaven and new earth, or eternal death, separated from Him, which the Bible calls hell.

*John 3:16, 1 John 2:25, 1 John 5:11-13, Romans 6:23, Revelation 20:15, Matthew 5:22, Luke 12:5*